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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE
FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
UNITED NATIONS
Drafting Group
28th meeting
2 August 1995

COMMEMORATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Draft declaration (rolling text 4) submitted by the Chairman

1. On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we, the Heads of State, Heads of Government and Heads of Delegation, representing the peoples of the world:

- Solemnly reaffirm the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and our commitments to them, particularly the principles of the sovereignty, sovereign equality, territorial integrity and non-interference in the domestic jurisdiction of States, the peaceful settlement of disputes and the avoidance of the threat or use of force

- Express our gratitude to all men and women who have made the United Nations possible, done its work and served its ideals, particularly those who have given their lives during service to the United Nations

- Are determined that the United Nations of the future will work with renewed vigour and effectiveness in promoting peace, development, equality, justice, and understanding amongst the peoples of the world.

2. It remains deeply relevant to recall that the Charter of the United Nations was written following the untold sufferings of the Second World War. Its commitment "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" is as vital today as it was 50 years ago. In this, as in other respects, the Charter gives expression to the common values and aspirations of humankind.

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3. The United Nations has been tested by conflict, humanitarian crisis and turbulent change, yet it has survived and played an important role in preventing another global conflict and has achieved much for people all over the world. The United Nations has helped to shape the very structure of relations between nations in the modern age. Through the decolonization process and the elimination of apartheid hundreds of millions of human beings have been assured the fundamental right of self determination, and, at this time, which is also the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, it is widely recognized that a new era for democracy, peace and unity has been opened.

4. The speed and extent of change in today's world point to a future of great complexity and challenge and to a sharp increase in the level of expectations of the United Nations.

5. For these reasons and in order to be able to learn from mistakes made in the past and to accept the challenges of the future, it is essential that the United Nations itself be reformed, restructured and modernized. The General Assembly, the universal organ of the Member States of the United Nations, must be revitalized. The role of the Economic and Social Council must be strengthened to enable it to carry out effectively, in the modern age, the tasks it has been assigned with respect to the well-being and standards of life of all people. The Security Council's effectiveness must be increased through an expansion of its membership and further improvements in its working efficiency and the transparency of its work and procedures. These and other essential changes within the United Nations system, including in its secretariats, must now be made if we are to ensure that the United Nations of the future serves well the people in whose name it was established.

6. To meet these challenges, while recognizing that action to secure global peace, security and stability will be futile unless the economic and social needs of people, as well as of States, are addressed, we will:

- Promote methods and means for the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and enhance the capabilities of the United Nations in conflict prevention, preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and peace-building

- Strongly support the United Nations, regional and national actions on arms control and disarmament and on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, in all its aspects, and other weapons of mass destruction, including biological and chemical weapons and other forms of particularly inhumane weapons, in pursuit of our common commitment to a world free of such weapons

- Act together to defeat the threats to States and peoples posed by terrorism, in all its forms and manifestations, and internationally organized crime and the illicit narcotics and illicit arms trades

- Strengthen consultation and cooperation between regional arrangements or agencies and the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security.

7. A dynamic, vigorous, free and equitable international economic environment is essential to the well-being of humankind and to international peace, security and stability. This need must be addressed, in greater measure, by the United Nations system.

8. The United Nations has played an important role in the promotion of economic and social development and has, over the years, provided life-saving assistance to women, children and men around the world. But the pledge recorded in the Charter that all members of the United Nations shall take joint and separate action in cooperation with the Organization for the achievement of higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development, has not been adequately implemented.

9. It must be recognized that notwithstanding past efforts, the gap between the developed and developing countries remains unacceptably high. Accelerating globalization and interdependence in the world economy call for policy measures designed to ensure the maximization of the benefits from and the minimization of the negative effects of these trends for all countries, developing, developed and those with economies in transition.

10. Of greatest concern is that one fifth of the world's 5.7 billion people live in abject poverty. Extraordinary measures of international cooperation are needed to address this and related problems.

11. In response to these facts and circumstances, the United Nations has convened a number of specifically focused global conferences in the last five years. As a result, a consensus has emerged on concepts of sustained economic growth and sustainable development, at the core of which is recognition that the human person is the central subject of development and must be at the centre of our actions towards such development.

12. In this context, we are convinced that democracy, individual freedom, and the promotion and protection of all human rights, including the right to development, are interdependent and mutually reinforcing and are indispensable foundations of development.

13. In order to foster sustained economic growth and sustainable development and in fulfilment of the commitments we have made on international economic cooperation for development, we are resolved to:

- Promote an open and equitable, rule-based, predictable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system and framework for trade, investment and transfers of technology and knowledge, as well as enhanced cooperation in the areas of finance and debt for development, as critical conditions for sustained economic growth and development

- Give particular attention to national and international action to enhance the benefits of the process of globalization for all countries and to avoid the marginalization from the world economy of the least developed countries and countries in Africa

- Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations system for development and strengthen its role in all relevant fields of international economic cooperation

- Invigorate the dialogue and partnership between the developed and developing countries, and with countries with economies in transition, on all development issues based on the imperatives of mutual benefit and interest and genuine interdependence, while recognizing that each country is ultimately responsible for its own development, but reaffirming that the international community must create a supportive international environment for such development

- Promote social development through decisive national and international action aimed at the eradication of poverty as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of humankind, and the promotion of full employment and social integration

- Recognize that the empowerment and the full participation of women is central to all efforts to achieve development

- Reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and promote appropriate demographic policies in order to meet the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, recognizing that environmental sustainability constitutes an integral part of the development process

- Intensify cooperation on natural disaster reduction and major technological and man-made disasters, disaster relief, post-disaster rehabilitation and humanitarian assistance, in order to enhance the capabilities of countries, particularly developing countries and affected countries with economies in transition, to cope with such situations.

14. We reiterate the Charter's affirmation of the equal rights of and the dignity and worth of the human person, the equal rights of men and women and the principle that all human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated.

15. While the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of all States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is also important for all States to ensure the universality, objectivity and non-selectivity of their policies towards human rights issues.

16. We will therefore:

- Promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, which are inherent to all human beings

- Strengthen laws, policies and programmes that would ensure the full participation of women in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life as equal partners and the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women

- Protect the rights of the child

- Ensure the rights of groups who can be particularly vulnerable to abuse or neglect, including youth, persons with disabilities, the elderly and migrant workers

- Support and protect the rights of indigenous people

- Ensure the protection of the rights of displaced persons and implement international agreements on such protection

- Ensure that the rights of national minorities are protected, and that such groups are able to pursue economic and social development and live in circumstances of full respect for their identity, traditions, forms of social organization and cultural and religious values.

17. The Charter of the United Nations has provided a durable framework for the promotion and development of international law. The continued promotion and development of international law must be pursued with renewed determination, with the view to ensuring that relations between States are based on the principles of justice, universally accepted principles of international law and respect for the rule of law. Such action is particularly required given developments under way in technology, transport, information and resource-related fields and international financial markets, as well as the growing complexity of the work of the United Nations in the humanitarian and refugee assistance fields.

18. We are determined to:

- Promote acceptance of and full respect for all principles of international law

- Build and maintain justice amongst all States, large and small, in full compliance with the principles of the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States, enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations

- Settle international disputes by peaceful means

- Encourage the widest possible ratification of international treaties and compliance with the obligations arising from them

- Promote respect for and implementation of international humanitarian law

- Implement all international law on all human rights and fundamental freedoms and encourage universal respect for such law

- Promote the further codification and progressive development of international law, in particular that which would foster economic and social progress consistent with the Charter's commitment to better standards of life in larger freedom, and the right to development.

19. We recognize that our common work, as States, will be the more successful if it is joined and supported by all concerned actors, individuals and groups in civil society, non-governmental organizations and the private sector. We will welcome and facilitate such support and appropriate participation.

20. A healthy and capable United Nations system requires adequate budgets and resources derived from an agreed and fair system of assessment. Such agreement must be implemented by Member States meeting in full and on time their financial obligations to the United Nations system.

21. The secretariats of the United Nations system must improve significantly their efficiency and effectiveness in administering and managing the resources allocated to them by Member States. For their part, Member States will pursue and take responsibility for restructuring that system.

22. Our resolve on this historic occasion is clear. The commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations must be seized as an opportunity to redirect it to greater service to humankind, especially to those who are suffering and are deeply deprived. This is the practical and moral challenge of our time. Our obligation to this end is found in the Charter. The need for it is manifest in the condition of humankind. We will give to the twenty-first century a United Nations equipped and structured to serve effectively the causes of peace, development, equality and justice.